1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1



tion but because they take pride in making the best of what they have. Most of the meager sums of money they do have are probably sent in from a son who has a job outside the mountains. Government programs of supplying food are also periodically necessary to support these hardy people.

There are two historical factors accounting for the hardiness assigned to the mountain people over the plains dwellers. Before independence, the plainsmen, particularly in Thessaly and Macedonia, were attached to the estates of absentee Turkish landlords and, according to travelers' accounts, lived in tenancy approaching serfdom, despised by the more independent Greeks of the mountains. Further, the plains villagers suffered for centuries from the terrible malaria of the lowlands; drained of vitality, they were probably actually poorer physical specimens than the peasants of the more healthy uplands.

As various features of the peasant's life unfold, particularly in a later discussion of village ways, we can understand even better the differences between the peoples of the mountains and the plains. Nevertheless, we should not forget that as villagers the two groups hold much in common, such as their shared loyalty to their village and their tendency to be distrustful of the "outside world," particularly of the central-government officials in Athens.

## The Sea

If mountains and plains are disappointing in the resources they contribute to Greece, then surely, one would think, the sea would more than compensate by providing fish in abundance. As a matter of fact, fish are an important source of protein in the Greek diet, but before the Second World War less than half of the total amount of fish eaten (35,000 to 40,000 metric tons) was caught by Greek fishermen in Greek seas. The rest had to be bought from abroad, often from neighboring countries, out of the country's meager store of foreign exchange.[14] Students of the problem seem to believe that the sea around Greece is rich in fish and that the trouble lies in the failure of the authorities to promote and foster a fishing industry. The many fishing boats destroyed during the war are being replaced, though slowly.

The merchant marine of Greece has been through the years a source of national pride. Here is one way the sea has been put to good advantage. Before World War II Greek ships totaled 1,900,000 tons and included 500 ocean-going vessels and a coastal and Mediterranean fleet of 55 large ships and 733 caiques, or small sailing boats. In 1946 there remained 138 miscellaneous ships totaling 501,000 tons. The sale of 100 liberty ships by the United States government to Greek operators at one fourth of the original cost contributed much to the rebuilding of the Greek merchant marine.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1



marine. As of November 1957, the Greek merchant fleet numbered 541 vessels, whose tonnage totaled 1,510,535 tons. By 1961 its 1,110 ships amounted to 5,893,652 tons.

In addition to being a potential economic asset, the sea makes its influence felt in a psychological sense. "The Romans built roads but the Greeks always used the sea" was an observation made to me by a retired Greek admiral. The more one thinks about this simple statement of difference between two great nations of antiquity, the clearer become the varied bases for their greatness. Rome, the conqueror of the European continent and much of the Mediterranean world, held on to her territorial conquests for centuries, but the lasting conquests of ancient Greece were not those of territory, which she also conquered from time to time, but the victory of a superior culture. The Romans were administrators of subject lands; the Greeks became traders and merchants who colonized along the coasts of the whole known world, accumulated their wealth in cities, and maintained a competitive individualism much in evidence even today.

From this tradition of the sea the Greek has gained an outward look, sometimes carried to extremes. "He knows about every country but his own" commented a Westerner who had spent many years in Greece.

An old, old peasant put the way he felt toward the sea and what it meant to him in these words:

"Look over the sea," he said, pointing to the shining water in the distance. "Do you know anything farther than that? Going over the sea means going over to America. In the olden days, under the pressure of need, one stole from the other and the other fought back and killed and so got out of the country. Only the goat thieves and the peasants were left. For us village people, 'farther than the sea' means not just emigrating but also means bringing in. We can use it to improve life. Here near our village we have a waterfall and big water supply; we can have electricity and irrigation but we need scientists from across the sea to tell us how to use what we have. Then more people can live on the land and will not need to emigrate."

There are many Greeks, especially women, in isolated villages who have never seen the sea. Even for them it seems to have a deep emotional meaning, for, as one Greek folklorist explained to me, there is an unconscious worship of water all over Greece. A twenty-one-year-old peasant girl on her way to relatives in Athens rode with us from her village in the heart of the Peloponnesos. This was her first trip away from home. We stopped on the brow of a mountain while she had her first view of the sea. She who had ridden with us for many miles, shy and silent, looked out to the wide indigo horizon and cried, "Thalassa! thalassa!" (The sea! the sea!), and then subsided, wide-eyed. It was obvious to all of us that she was deeply

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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slavia and Albania come together, and a Turkish Moslem minority in Thrace. Official figures on the size of these minorities have not been published, but in all probability neither much exceeds 60,000 persons.

Greece is a small country, with a total area of slightly more than 50,000 square miles, or just about the size of the state of Illinois. It is also a poor country, lacking in any very important natural resources, short of fuel, but blessed with a magnificent climate similar to that of southern California. The country is very mountainous. Patches of fertile land, none of them very large, are separated from each other by tangles of barren hill and mountain. The main crops are wheat, grapes, olives, cotton and tobacco; and of these tobacco is by all odds the most important for foreign trade, since all the wheat and nearly all the cotton, wine and olive oil are consumed within the country, leaving only a surplus of tobacco, currants and a few other specialized agricultural products for export.

Industry is comparatively weak. Greek industrial exports have seldom been able to compete in price or quality on world markets. The Greek merchant marine, on the other hand, is one of the important fleets of the world; but many Greek-owned ships are not registered in Greece, and many of the most successful Greek shipowners do not live in the country of their birth. The reason is that Greek taxes on ships and shipowners are heavier than those levied by some other countries, and the shipowners therefore find it expedient to register their ships and take their profits elsewhere. They do, however, often recruit their crews in the home country, and thus offer a source of employment to several thousand Greeks.

Greece fought on the Allied side in both the first and second world wars, suffered German and Italian occupation between 1941 and 1944, and became a special British "sphere of influence" in political and military matters during 1944–46. Since

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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[Village Life]



Hence a sort of symbiosis was established. A large proportion of the able-bodied men of the hill villages descended each year to the plains and worked in the fields of the Turkish landowners, then returned to their homes with wages, either in money or in kind, with which to supplement the produce of the tiny fields they had been able to carve from the mountain valleys and slopes around their homes. 361 464 166 433

Some of the hill villages developed occupational specialties,[1] sending most of their able-bodied men each year to labor as masons or carpenters wherever work was to be found. Groups of villagers sometimes walked as much as a hundred miles to and from the scene of this sort of seasonal employment. Other villages developed what might be called industrial specialties – lime burning, rug weaving, wood carving and the like – and peddled their products far and wide during the summer season. One village even developed an international trade in specially dyed red wool and cloth during the latter years of the eighteenth century, stationing agents in such cities as Vienna, Constantinople and Leipzig. The origins of the modern Greek merchant marine were similar, for sailors were easily recruited among peasant boys of the islands and coasts, who sought seasonal employment to supplement what could be produced on the family farm. 361 438 464 166 433 [505]

Another pattern of migration should be mentioned, up into the higher mountain slopes rather than down to the plains. Each summer herds of sheep and goats were sent to pasture on the high ground, where vegetation stayed green through the summer drought, and then returned to lower altitudes when the snows fell. Quite a few hill villages specialized in sheepherding, accompanying their own sheep, and sometimes sheep entrusted to them by others as well, on this annual round.

As long as the hill villages lay between two relatively unpopulated geographic regions – the plains beneath and the peaks 361 166 464 433

[1] [During Turkish times - ANALYST]